

Entry (Narrative Summary)

The entry, or narrative summary, is clear, concise, well-written text summarizing the property's significance and briefly describing and evaluating its architecture and relating its history. The entry provides future users of the file with a quick understanding and evaluation of the property. The entry is also designed for use in the catalog section of any future publication of the survey. Although it is seldom possible within the limits of a survey project to conduct intensive research on each property, the general goal is to find out who built the property, their role in the local society and economy, and significant later owners and residents--where this information is available through family history, local tradition, and readily accessible documentation. The amount of research and oral history on properties will vary greatly depending on significance of the property, access to knowledgeable individuals, and quantity of existing historical information, as well as the time available for research. For areas (usually urban) in which the survey data to be gathered is limited to select fields on the survey form, it is normal for the entries to be quite brief, but they should still cover the basics of the overall design and any history that has been gleaned. Remember that the entry, or narrative summary, is the place on the survey form to note significant data that is not recorded elsewhere on the survey form. See "Writing Survey Entries" on page 49 and entries in the narrative summary field of sample survey forms in the appendix.

Supportive Information

The file should contain notes obtained from interviews and basic research, photocopies of historical information, etc.--all identified as to sources--to undergird and expand on the entry. Label every piece of paper for each file with the survey site number, property name, and county or town.

GUIDELINES FOR UPDATING EXISTING SURVEY FILES

Considering that North Carolina's first formal architectural survey project overseen by the office³ that was to become the State Historic Preservation Office began in 1967, any comprehensive survey project undertaken today almost certainly is going to entail examination of properties for which the HPO already has a survey file. This is particularly true of projects in the state's urban areas, and new National Register nominations for districts often address areas that already have been comprehensively surveyed. In the course of the new survey, the previously recorded properties will be re-visited and re-recorded for data-entry into the HPO's survey database.

During the update fieldwork, the surveyor will observe whether previously recorded buildings have undergone significant changes such as replacement of window sash, application of vinyl siding, removal or replacement of a porch, or construction of a sizeable addition. Other types of changes may merit recordation as well. The surveyor should compare the photocopied survey form, entry (if one exists), and photos in the existing file to the present appearance of the building. The surveyor may make field notes on the photocopied survey form to record any such changes or use the historic property field data form geared to the HPO's database.

The updating of survey documentation for properties previously recorded on a multiple structures form (green paper form) poses certain challenges because the adoption in 2007 of digital recordation using a database requires the creation of a record for each individual property with its own survey site number and survey form (report form generated from the database). Survey files that utilized the green multiple structures form were assigned a single survey site number for the entire file, rather than a number for each property covered by that file. Consequently, the updating of the file involves